

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Streets, Roads, and Trails (SRT)

Charge to the Committee

General Charge to Committee

The Streets, Roads, and Trails (SRT) Committee shall seek a community consensus on how best to finance Lincoln's future street, roads, and trails funding gap.

This task should be accomplished primarily through educational and informational activities designed to show Lincoln area residents the importance of infrastructure maintenance and expansion to the city's long term quality of life and economic vitality.

The Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Committee (MIFC) completed months of research and common dialogue concerning realistic financing options for maintaining Lincoln's existing public infrastructure, while delivering the public infrastructure required to further planned community growth. The Committee's effort culminated in a recommended comprehensive financing package submitted to local elected officials in May of 2003.

The MIFC Committee recommendations were developed and offered by Mayor Seng as a cohesive five part finance package to create an ongoing funding stream for infrastructure maintenance and expansion which included:

- ❑ A disciplined systematic approach to adjust **water rates** to increase revenues that support revenue bonds for system wide expansion and facility enhancements. The utility fee increases should occur on a periodic basis over the next twelve years and should not exceed 5 percent in anyone year.
- ❑ A disciplined systematic approach to adjust **wastewater rates** to increase revenues that support revenue bonds for system wide expansion and facility enhancements. The utility fee increases should occur on a periodic basis over the next twelve years and should not exceed 5 percent in anyone year.
- ❑ Institute periodic increases in the City's **Wheel Tax** – specifically a \$5 increase in calendar years 2004, 2007, and 2010 – with the additional revenues going directly toward the construction of new and improved streets and highways.
- ❑ Establish an **“Occupation Tax” on the retail sale of gasoline** within the City of Lincoln equal to approximately 5 cents per gallon effective in the year 2004.
- ❑ Seek voter approval of a **General Obligation (G.O.) Bond** totally approximately \$106 million for **transportation system improvements**. Funds were to be earmarked for roadway construction and improvements, existing arterial and residential street rehabilitation, sidewalk reconstruction, and maintenance of existing trails.

In August 2003 the City Council adopted three of the five components by approving a water rate increase, wastewater rate increase and a three step increase in the wheel tax. The largest funding gap remains unresolved. Funding for streets, sidewalks and transportation remain the key issue that must be addressed and resolved.

Since the streets, roads, and trails funding proposals were not adopted by the City Council the SRT Committee is to focus on seeking a resolution to close the funding gap through continued pursuit of a possible government bond issue and other new revenue sources that will increase local or state funding targeted toward transportation infrastructure. The SRT can conduct additional research if necessary, but the research shall not revisit issues that have already been resolved by the Committee -- rather it should seek clarification and refinement to the implementation of the Committee's May 2003 package of recommendations.

Key Working Assumptions

1. The City-County Comprehensive Plan serves as the basic framework for determining assumed future rates of growth and development – particularly for the 12 year planning horizon assumed by the MIFC. For purposes of examining future construction and funding needs, an effective period of up to 15 years should be used. The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan should be closely coordinated with the City's capital budgeting process. The balancing of growth and public revenues should be a consideration in determining public planning and financing policy.
2. The funding priorities remain maintenance of existing facilities which shall be given primary consideration, followed by projects of broad community benefit, and infrastructure improvements that further planned urban growth.
3. Sidewalk rehabilitation funding needs should be assumed to be \$6 million and trail rehabilitation funding needs should be assumed to be \$3.5 million over the 2004 to 2009 time period.
4. Revenues from the development impact fees program as implemented in June 2003 are part of the overall funding package.
5. The Committee's area of responsibility shall remain limited to transportation infrastructure (i.e., streets, highways, trails and sidewalks), water, wastewater, stormwater, and park facilities.
6. Implementation of the "Cost Savings and Efficiency Recommendations" are assumed to occur during the time period covered by the SST Committee's work.
7. The City is instituting a process to periodically assess street conditions to determine the appropriate rehabilitation program in accordance with the recommendation in the Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Report issued in May 2003. The current program budget allows for rehabilitation of approximately 100 blocks of residential streets per year. Pending the final outcome of the street condition assessment program, the SST Committee should plan

adequate funding to accommodate an increase in rehabilitation to a total of approximately 200 blocks of residential streets per year for up to a maximum of 5 years.

Time Frame and Reporting

The Committee shall serve for a period of up to one year, or as otherwise determined by the Mayor.

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January 6, 2004 (5:33am)*